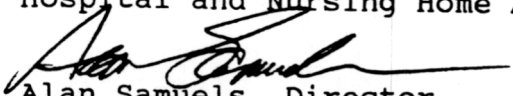


May 5, 1995

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Hospital and Nursing Home Administrators

FROM:   
Alan Samuels, Director  
Division of Health Licensing

SUBJECT: Conditions that will allow a provider-wide partial exception to the requirements of Regulation 61-16, Standards for Licensing Hospitals and Institutional General Infirmaries, Section 1005.2, and Regulation 61-17, Standards for Licensing Nursing Homes, Section J.(4)(b)(2).

R61-16, Section 1005.2, requires that, "All linen from patients with infectious or communicable diseases shall be placed in durable bags identified 'contaminated' and transported in these closed bags to the soiled linen holding area or laundry." R61-17, Section J.(4)(b)(2), requires that, "All linen, restraints and resident clothes from residents with infectious or communicable diseases shall be placed in durable bags identified 'Contaminated' and transported in these closed bags to the soiled linen holding area or laundry."

After careful review of the OSHA document Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens, 29 CFR Part 1910.1030, published in the Federal Register on December 6, 1991, and in the interest of establishing reasonable standards which can be met by providers and yet do not compromise the health and welfare of patients cared for in South Carolina hospitals or of residents cared for in South Carolina nursing homes, we have determined that an alternative standard will be considered as acceptable.

All hospitals and nursing homes will be required to meet the standard outlined in their respective licensing standard, R61-16 Section 1005.2, or R61-17, Section J.(4)(b)(2), or, as an alternative:

When a facility utilizes Universal Precautions in the handling of all soiled linen, alternative labeling or color-coding of bagged soiled linen is sufficient if it permits all on-site or off-site handlers to recognize the containers as requiring compliance with Universal Precautions. Examples of alternative labeling or color-coding might include, containers labeled, "UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS" or red soiled linen bags.

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This standard in R61-16, Section 1005.2 or R61-17, J.(4)(b)(2), will be enforced during inspections, as required either by the regulation or the provider-wide exception. This exception applies to any hospital or nursing home licensed by the Department. It relates solely to South Carolina licensing standards. Any adverse condition(s) that may be related to this exception may result in revocation of the exception by the Department.

If there are any questions, you may call (803) 737-7202.

AS:DG

cc: Douglas E. Bryant  
Alice Truluck  
Robert Ball, M.D.  
J. Randall Lee, SCHCA  
Elaine E. Guyton, SCANPHA  
Louetta A. Slice, SCNHA  
William Yates, SCHA